Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0003] with the following amended paragraph:

[0003] In Fig. 1, a prior art e-mail exchange system 10 is shown to include an Network Access/Service Provider B 17, a data communications network 14 (such as an Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA)-Internet), an Network Access/Service Provider A 16, a Public Switched Telephone Network 13 and a user A 18. The network 14 is comprised of switching devices, computers and their interconnections. Such devices include routers, switches, servers and other types of data networking equipment for transferring data from one computer system or location to another. The ARPA-Internet is merely an example of such a network. The Network Access/Service Provider (NASP) B [[12]] 16 is shown to include an e-mail server 20 representing the computer system or network of computer systems, which provide or add infrastructure to the NASP's overall e-mail exchange capability. Typically, the e-mail service provider 20 implements some or all of the various contemporary methods prescribed by conventions, adhered to by parties wishing to interchange data on the data communications network 14. Additionally, the e-mail services provider 20 may implement policies which limit or regulate the use of, or access to e-mail services within the Network Access/Service Provider A 16 network; perhaps for the purpose of deriving revenue or for security reasons as is deemed appropriate by the Network Access/Service Provider A 16 administrative authority.

Please replace paragraph [0044] with the following amended paragraph:

[0044] Fig.6 shows an embodiment of the present invention to include an e-mail/fax communication system [[90]] 91.

Please replace paragraph [0047] with the following amended paragraph:

[0047] Referring now to Fig. 6, an embodiment of the present invention is shown tot include an e-mail/fax communication system [[90]] 91 having an NASP device 106 coupled to a PSTN 104 and the latter coupled to a plurality of recipient fax devices 120. The plurality of recipient fax devices includes a recipient fax device 98, recipient fax device 100 and up to n number of

recipient fax devices, the last one being recipient fax device 102. Each of the recipient fax devices may be employed by users. For example, the recipient fax device 98 is shown to be employed under the direction of a user 92, the recipient fax device 100 is shown to tbe employed under the direction of a user 94 and the recipient fax device 102 is employed under the direction of a user 96. The PSTN 104 is comprised of a typical telephone company (telco) communications structure for transferring information (in analog or digital form) between fax and/or telephone devices.

Please replace paragraph [0049] with the following amended paragraph:

[0049] The fax users, 92 – 96, fall within the special class of users, discussed earlier, who do not have access to e-mail yet wish to receive and send message from and to other e-mail users. Consequently, these fax users sign up with an NASP, such as America Online, Inc. In Fig. [4] 6, they sign up with the NASP device 106 and at the time they do so, they provide their fax number and the time-of-day that they wish to receive fax documents. The latter is important to some users because their fax machine may be located in, for example, a residential area where they do not desire to be awakened by the sound of a receiving fax (out of normal business hours).

Please replace paragraph [0061] with the following amended paragraph:

[0061] Alternatively, if the time-of-day is defined by the customer (or fax recipient) to be other than any time and it is specified to be a time other than when the e-mail is received, then the fax is queued until the next time of day, as specified by the fax recipient to the NASP. There are two ways of queuing the message. In accordance with one method of the present invention, the e-mail message is stored in the user's mailbox as a native e-mail message. The mailbox resides in mass storage location 124. It should be noted that where a user receives multiple messages, a plurality of messages are tehn stored in the user's mail box. In an alternative embodiment of the present invention, the message is converted into a format suitable for transmission over fax and then stored as a graphical representation thereof. With reference to Fig. 6, this conversion is done by dedicated software within the fax e-mail gateway capability 110. The preferred method, as known to the inventor, is to store the message in e-mail rather than fax format becauser e-mailmessages require less storage space (and also permits the user to access e-mail using either

fax or conventional POP, e.g. RFC1725 as recited above, IMAP, e.g. RFC1730 as recited above, or other like techniques.)

Please replace paragraph [0069] with the following amended paragraph:

[0069] Thus, the NASP device 106, upon receipt of a reply fax document from on eof the fax recipients 98-102, automatically interprets the first page of the reply fax to determine to whom an e-mail message need be sent, which in this case is the original e-mail sender. It also determines who the reply fax document is from, which in this case may be identified as a normal e-mail address. The fax e-mail gateway 110 converts the remainder of the fax document into a widely recognizable graphical representation of the same (e.g. GIF, TIFF or JPEG graphics formats), creates a new e-mail message which is [[addresses]] addressed with the information extracted from the cover page via OCR aboe, and to which it attaches tehconverted fax document, perhaps using a MIME [RFC2045 – 2049, as cited above] attachment type, and inserts a textual remark into th ee-mail message to indicate to the recipient that the e-mail was generated by a fax e-mail conversion gateway and that the original fax document which is being sent is reproduced in the attached (GIF, TIFF or JPEG file, to access the same, simply click on the file.) Thus, in the example of the shopkeeper as the fax recipient (one of fax recipients 98-102), the shopkeeper's response will appear as a MIME-attached "GIF" (or "TIFF" or "JPEG") file in a reply e-mail. With the use of the present invention, the shopkeeper therefore is capable of sending and receiving e-mail messages simply by using a fax machine and without the need for other computer equipment.

Please replace paragraph [0071] with the following amended paragraph:

[0071] Some of the steps performed by the e-mail service provider 123 are enumerated in flow chart format in Fig. 7. [[St]] At step 150, the e-mail service provider 123 (shown in Fig. 6) receives an e-mail message from an e-mail sender. Next, at 152, the e-mail service provider 123 makes a determination as to whether or not the address of the destination (or fax recipient) is known to the NASP. If not, a failed message is sent to the e-mail sender at step 154 and the process ends at 156. On the other hand, if the identity of the destination of the e-mail message is known to the NASP device 106, at 158, the NASP determines whether or not the current time is within the window of time specified by the fax recipient as the time-of-day. If not, at step 160,

the e-mail message is saved in the storage device 124 (shown in Fig. 6) and at 162, the fax e-mail gateway 110 waits the proper time within which is specified by the fax recipient and the process continues to step 164. If at 158, the time-of-day, as specified by the fax recipient, includes the current time, the process also continues to step 164.

Please replace paragraph [0085] with the following amended paragraph:

[0085] In Fig. 8, the [[administration domain 220]] networking environment 200 is shown to include one geographical location within which services 204, 206, 208 and 212 are included. Alternatively, the [[administration domain 220]] networking environment 200 may include one or more geopgraphical locations, each of which includes its own services 204, 206, 208 and 212 and one service 214 may service all of the geopgraphical locations within the [[administration domain 220]] networking environment 200. Furthermore, each geopgraphical location may be remotely located with respect to other geopgraphical locations.